

REMARKS

The Office rejects claims 1-4 in the subject application. Claims 1-4 (1 independent claims; 4 total claims) remain pending in the application.

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §102 REJECTIONS

The Examiner rejects claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Darmawaskita (U.S. Patent No. 6,184,659, issued February 6, 2001 to Microchip Technology). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Darmawaskita discloses a single Integrated circuit package for controlling the charging circuits of a battery charger.¹ A microcontroller 102 monitors condition values of a battery 112 being charged. These condition values are received at the analog inputs 118. Digital values are received at input(s) 120 for use by microcontroller 102. Typical digital values at input 120 are battery identification codes, presence of a battery to be charged, high temperature, low water or electrolyte level, and high pressure.

But Darmawaskita fails to teach, advise, or suggest "a liquid detection section for detecting infiltration or generation of a liquid inside a secondary battery or inside a battery pack in which the secondary battery is installed" as recited in claim 1 (and claims 2-4, which variously depend from claim 1).

The Examiner alleges that the digital values at input 120 disclose detecting infiltration or generation of a liquid inside a secondary battery (or inside a battery pack) as claimed. First, Darmawaskita fails to disclose a liquid detection section. Second, the digital values indicate low water or electrolyte level. Indeed, these digital values are either hi or low (i.e., a switch, on or off).² But merely detecting whether or not there is a low water or electrolyte level does not amount to a liquid detection section for detecting infiltration or generation of a liquid inside a secondary battery or inside a battery pack. There is a clear difference between determining whether or not there is a low water or electrolyte level and determining whether there is infiltration (or generation) of a liquid in a battery. Darmawaskita fails to disclose a liquid detection section, and furthermore, fails to disclose detecting infiltration or generation of a liquid inside a battery.

¹ Darmawaskita, Abstract.

Darmawaskita also fails to teach, advise, or suggest "a control section for interrupting charging/discharging of the secondary battery in a case where a liquid is detected by the liquid detection section" as recited in claim 1 (and claims 2-4, which variously depend from claim 1).

The Examiner alleges that controller 104 and microcontroller 102 in Darmawaskita disclose a control section for interrupting charging/discharging of the secondary battery in a case where a liquid is detected by the liquid detection section. Controller 104 of Darmawaskita monitors the selected battery current and/or voltage during charging (but makes no mention of interrupting charging/discharging). Accordingly, controller 104 fails to disclose a control section for interrupting charging/discharging of the secondary battery as recited in claim 1.

Microcontroller 102 of Darmawaskita controls the charging priority and duration for batteries 312a and 312b. Neither controller 104 or microcontroller 102 disclose interrupting charging/discharging of the secondary battery in a case where a liquid is detected by the liquid detection section" as recited in claim 1 (emphasis added).

Thus, Darmawaskita fails to teach, advise, or suggest one or more of the claimed limitations, so that claims 1-4 are patentable over Darmawaskita.

² Darmawaskita, column 5, lines 59-60.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is thus requested. Applicant invites the Office to telephone the undersigned if he or she has any questions whatsoever regarding this Response or the present application in general.

Respectfully submitted,

By: S. Shahpar 2-8-05
Shahpar Shahpar
Reg. No. 45,875

SNELL & WILMER L.L.P.
One Arizona Center
400 East Van Buren
Phoenix, Arizona 85004-2202
Phone: (602) 382-6306
Fax: (602) 382-6070
Email: sshahpar@swlaw.com